UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/377,402	08/20/1999	SHUNSUKE AKIFUJI	520.3746X00	7780

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EXAMINER
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ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3623	

DATE MAILED: 11/04/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

PTO-90C (Rev. 07-01)

	Application No.	Applicant(s)
Office Action Summary	09/377,402	AKIFUJI ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Rebecca M Bachner	3623	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE <u>3</u> MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on <u>15 July 2002</u> .

2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.

3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213..

Disposition of Claims

4) ☒ Claim(s) <u>1,2,4-6 and 8-16</u> is/are pending in the application.

    4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) ☒ Claim(s) <u>1,2,4-6 and 8-16</u> is/are rejected.

7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.

    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.

    If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:

        1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

        2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .

        3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

    a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) <u>9</u> .
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: .

DETAILED ACTION

1.   The following is a Non-Final Office Action in response to the communication

received on July 15, 2002. Claims 1-2, 4-6, and 8-16 are pending.

Applicant's Arguments:

2.   The following arguments were presented by the applicant. Following the

argument is the examiner's response. All the rejections are maintained.

1.)   Applicant argues that Flores et al.'s follow-up manager "does not have a function

of issuing a notification for informing a user that one of his tasks (business process)

should be interrupted because its interdependent process has been already

discontinued." Applicant also states that Flores "does not intend to perform a plurality

of interdependent business processes simultaneously in a business procedure and to

prevent relevant users from executing useless business processes when one of related

business processes is discontinued or interrupted by a relevant user." Applicant further

states that the observer is not a selected user of a business process.

        However claim 1, as disclosed by the applicant, merely states "notifying a client

computer corresponding to a selected user of the occurrence of a status change in the

related business process". The claim does not state that the notification refers to the

interdependent business processes performed simultaneously. This argument by the

applicant is referring to the processes described in the preamble, not in the claims. The

information in the preamble is read in light of the claims, but this information is not given

patentable weight.

As for the applicant's arguments, first, Flores et al. does disclose that the

processes can execute simultaneously. In column 2, line 33-62, and in figure 1, Flores

et al. discloses parallel workflows. Furthermore, parallel workflows are workflows (or

processes) that are executed simultaneously. Therefore, there is no difference between

simultaneously executing workflows, or business processes as disclosed by the

applicant, and parallel workflows as disclosed by Flores et al.

Second, column 4, lines 30-34, as disclosed in the Final Office Action, describe

an observer. An observer may be a client computer or manager as they are "selected

user(s) who are in charge of a business process". This observer is informed of the

occurrences in the business process. Furthermore, Flores et al. defines the observer to

be a type of client notification and defines triggered and trigger to be an action in the

workflow based on status that cause another action to occur. The observer is informed

of "the acts in the workflow". Therefore, the observer can be "in charge of a business

process" as they are notified of the occurrence of any status changes in the workflow.

The examiner also referred to column 13 lines 39-56, in Flores et al. to show that

notification of the status occurs.

Furthermore, one can also see that the client computer is notified of the

occurrence of a status change in the related business/workflow process described in

column 11, lines 31-67 and the workflow updated discloses in column 19, lines 16-50.

The workflow uses the workflow updater to determine if the status has changed and notification is needed.

2.)   Applicant also argues that Reid does not disclose "selective alarming an occurrence of abnormal status change occurred in a normal machine to relevant users in charge of the business related process." Applicant also argues that Reid's status change only refers to machine trouble.

However, the claims do not state that there is selective alarming. The applicant does state that Reid refers to an abnormal status. Reid, in column 6, lines 46-59, discloses an unexpected status occurring as a result of an error. As summarized in column 2, lines 14-49, the status of a particular process is displayed in a remote location in the system. This status information of the software or hardware component is the status of a business process. A workflow process, such as that described by the applicant or by Flores, consists of hardware and software components. A workflow system cannot be executed on a computer if it does not contain the software and hardware components essential to a computer. Therefore, Reid's status does not only refer to machine trouble, but to the entire business related process.

3.)   Applicant argues that Flores et al. combined with Reid et al. does not disclose the status watcher for "detecting a status change in a business process being executed, including an occurrence of a status change in the business process, nor any notifier

used for notifying at least one client computers of the occurrence of the abnormal status change detected by the status watcher."

However, Flores et al. does disclose a status watcher. In column 4, lines 30-34, and 54-63, and column 20, lines 42-47, the triggers change the status of the workflow and the transaction manager initiate a new workflow processes. An observer is informed, or notified, of all acts occurring in the business process. The observer therefore detects the type of change to the status.

Furthermore, a status watcher occurs during the flow of the business process as described in Flores et al. in column 11, lines 31-67, and column 19, lines 16-50. The workflow process, using the workflow updater, detects a status change in a business process being executed. Flores et al. does not disclose an abnormal status change. However, Reid et al. does disclose detecting an occurrence of an abnormal status change in one of the plurality of related business processes in column 6, lines 46-59 (if the seven bit code is abnormal, then the status will show an abnormal status change). It would be obvious for Flores et al. to notify the client of an abnormal status change as Flores et al. already discloses notifying the client of a status change. At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious for Flores et al. to notify the user of an abnormal (or discontinuous) status change as the observer is informed of "the acts in the workflow" and an abnormal status change occurs in the workflow processes. A status device is used so that business processes in a workflow system may run smoothly and an observer and others concerned with the workflow process would want to use the status to stay informed of any abnormalities. One of ordinary skill in the art would have

been motivated to include abnormal status changes as it allows the observer to more accurately know what is occurring in the workflow processes.

4.)   Applicant states that combining Flores and Reid requires improper hindsight.

However, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine Flores et al. and Reid et al. The applicant already recited the combination of these references on page 7 stating that the references together disclose a workflow system where an abnormal status change is detected. Independent claim 1 recites that the workflow system detects an abnormal status change. As discussed above, Flores et al. does disclose a workflow system that indicates and notifies the client of the status of the system. Reid et al. discloses a system that can have an abnormal status. Therefore, the status disclosed by Reid can obviously be used by a workflow process, like that disclosed by Flores et al., since Reid et al.'s status indicates abnormal changes in the processing of a system and it would be useful for Flores et al. to know about any abnormal changes occurring in the system. Flores et al. would be motivated to have Reid et al.'s abnormal status monitor as it would allow Flores et al.'s status to be more accurate and reliably describe the way that the system is functioning.

Therefore, applicants arguments are not found persuasive and the rejections are maintained and repeated below.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3.   The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set
> forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and
> the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the
> invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains.
> Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

4.   Claims 1-2, 4-6 and 8-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being

unpatentable over Flores et al. (P.N. 6,073,109) in view of Reid et al (P.N. 5,892,449).

(Amended) As per claim 1, Flores et al. disclose a workflow control method in a

workflow system connected to a plurality of client computers for carrying out business

procedures comprising a plurality of related business processes (see column 110, lines

26-33), at least one of the business procedures being allowed to execute some of the

business processes simultaneously (see column 2, line 33-62, and figure 1, the parallel

workflows allow the business procedures to be executed simultaneously), said workflow

control method is comprising the steps of:

    previously defining status changes to be detected in business processes when a

plurality of related business processes are executed simultaneously by said client

computers (see column 2, lines 33-62, and column 4, lines 57-63, the status changes

are detected by the business processes using triggered actions, a plurality of the

business processes can be executed simultaneously with the parallel workflows);

    selecting at least one user who is in charge of a business process

interdependent to the business process in which the status change was detected (see

column 4, lines 30-34, the observer is informed, or detects, the acts of the workflow,

these workflow acts include status changes); and

notifying a client computer corresponding to a selected user of the occurrence of

a status change in the related business process (see column 4, lines 30-34, an observer

is informed, or notified, of all acts occurring in the business process, also see column

13, lines 39-67, the follow up manager notifies the transaction manager by sending an

e-mail, executing a script, or other defined actions).

Flores et al. do not disclose an abnormal status change. However, Reid et al.

(P.N. 5,892,449) disclose detecting an occurrence of an abnormal status change in one

of the plurality of related business processes (see column 6, lines 45-59, if the seven bit

code is abnormal then the status will result in an abnormal status change). It would be

obvious for Flores et al. to notify the client of an abnormal status change as Flores et al.

already disclose notifying the client of a status change. At the time of the invention it

would have been obvious for Flores et al. to notify the user of an abnormal (or

discontinuous) status change as the observer is informed of "the acts in the workflow"

and an abnormal status change occurs in the workflow processes. A status device is

used so that business processes in a workflow system may run smoothly and an

observer and others concerned with the workflow processes would use the status to

stay informed of any abnormalities. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been

motivated to include abnormal status changes as it allows the observer to more

accurately know what is occurring during the workflow processes.

(Amended) As per claim 2, Flores et al. disclose in the workflow control method that status changes in the business process that are detected (see column 4, lines 57-63, all status changes are detected and another action results from the trigger). Flores do not disclose an abnormal status change in the business process that are detected includes a discontinuance of the business processes. Reid et al. disclose an abnormal status change that is detected including a discontinuance of the business processes (see column 6, lines 46-59, if the seven bit code is abnormal then the status will result in an abnormal status change and the transmittance will be discontinued). It would be obvious for Flores et al. to have an abnormal status change detect a discontinuance as Flores et al. already disclose a status change. At the time of the invention it would have been obvious for Flores et al. to notify the user of an abnormal (or discontinuous) status change as the observer is informed of "the acts in the workflow" and an abnormal status change occurs in the workflow processes. A status device is used so that business processes in a workflow system may run smoothly and people concerned with the workflow process would use the status to stay informed of any abnormalities. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to include abnormal status changes as it allows the status signal to more accurately state what is occurring in the workflow processes.

(Amended) As per claim 4, Flores et al. disclose a workflow control method according to claim 1, wherein the selection of at least one user is carried by referring rules defining the relation between predetermined business procedures and related

client computers (see column 8, lines 52-59, the workflow server is a type of workflow engine and it uses preset rules and procedures. It also selects the computers such as the STF processors and the transaction manager to execute the business processes).

(Amended) As per claim 5, Flores et al. disclose a workflow system connected to a plurality of client computer for executing business procedures including a plurality of business processes (see column 1, lines 12-22, and column 110, lines 26-33), at least one of the business procedures being allowed to execute some of the business processes simultaneously (see column 2, lines 33-62, the business procedures can execute in parallel, or simultaneously) comprising:

a status watcher for detecting a status change in a business process being executed, including an occurrence of a status change in the business process (see column 4, lines 30-34, and 54-63, and column 20, lines 42-47, the triggers change the status of the workflow and the transaction manager initiates new workflow processes. An observer is informed, or notified, of all acts occurring in the business process. The observer therefore detects the type of change to the status);

a workflow engine connected to the status watcher, for controlling the execution of each of the business procedures based on the status change detected by the status watcher and the predetermined business procedure definitions (see column 4, lines 30-34, the observer is a status watcher, the observer is informed, or detects, the acts of the workflow, these workflow acts include status changes, also see column 4, lines 57-63,

the status changes are detected by the business processes using the triggered action); and

a notifier for notifying at least one of the client computer of the occurrence of the stat change detected by the status watcher, the user of the client computer being in charge of a business process interdependent to a business process in which the status change was detected (see column 4, lines 30-34, an observer is informed, or notified, of all acts occurring in the business process, also see column 13, lines 39-6, the follow up manager notifies the transaction manager by sending an e-mail, executing a script, or other defined actions).

Flores et al. do not disclose a status watcher for detecting an occurrence of an abnormal status change in the business process. However, Reid et al. (P.N. 5,892,449) disclose detecting an occurrence of an abnormal status change in one of the plurality of related business processes (see column 6, lines 45-59, if the seven bit code is abnormal then the status will result in an abnormal status change). It would be obvious for Flores et al. to detect an abnormal status change as Flores et al. already disclose a status watcher. At the time of the invention it would have been obvious for Flores et al. to have the status watcher detect an abnormal or discontinuous status change as the observer is informed of "the acts in the workflow" and an abnormal status change occurs in the workflow processes. A status device is used so that business processes in a workflow system may run smoothly and an observer and others concerned with the workflow process would want to use the status to stay informed of any abnormalities. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to include abnormal status

changes as it allows the observer to more accurately know what is occurring in the workflow processes.

(Amended) As per claim 6, Flores et al. teach all disclose a status watcher (see column 4, lines 30-34, the observer is a status watcher, the observer is informed, or detects, the acts of the workflow, these workflow acts include status changes). Flores et al. does not disclose detecting a discontinuance in the business process. However, Reid et al. (P.N. 5,892,449) disclose detecting an occurrence of an abnormal status change or discontinuance in a business process (see column 6, lines 46-59, if the seven bit code is abnormal then the status will result in an abnormal status change and the transmittance will be discontinued). It would be obvious for Flores et al. to detect discontinuance or an abnormal status change as Flores et al. already disclose status changes. At the time of the invention it would have been obvious for Flores et al. to detect an abnormal or discontinuous status change as the observer is informed of "the acts in the workflow" and an abnormal status change occurs in the workflow processes. A status device is used so that business processes in a workflow system may run smoothly and an observer and others concerned with the workflow process would want to use the status to stay informed of any abnormalities. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to include discontinuous or abnormal status detection as it allows the observer to more accurately know what is occurring in the workflow processes.

(Amended) As per claim 8, Flores et al. teach all the limitations of claim 7 and Flores also disclose a resource selector for receiving an instruction and an identifier of the business process on which the abnormal status change was detected from the workflow engine, and selecting the client computer to be notified of said abnormal status change by referring predetermined rules previously defining the relation between predetermined business procedures and client computers thereby to designate the client computer to said notifier (see in column 12, lines 26-34).

(Amended) As per claim 9, Flores et al. disclose a storage medium capable of reading out stored information there from by a computer which stores programs for realizing the workflow control method (see column 11, lines 31-67 and column 110 lines 63-64, the transaction database stores the information about the workflow control method and can be read out by the transaction manager by way of the instantiator module).

As per claim 10, Flores et al. disclose all the limitations of claim 8 and the workflow system wherein the status watcher, the workflow engine, the notifier and the resource selector are individual programs executed concurrently to control the execution of each of the business procedures (see column 2, lines 33-62, the workflow system is executed in parallel and therefore each of the business procedures can be executed concurrently).

As per claim 11, Flores et al. disclose the workflow system according to claim 8, further comprising a status watcher and for a user retrevial unit for displaying the status change by the status watcher (see column 4, lines 30-34, and 45-47, the observer is a type of status watcher, the performer must inherently use a user retrieval unit to determine if a workflow is completed to satisfaction).

Flores et al. do not disclose handling abnormal status. Reid et al. teach creating attributes to handle the abnormal status detected by the status watcher using an exception handler unit (see column 6, lines 18-59, the bits are attributes describing the status of the workflow, an abnormal or discontinuous status can be detected, an exception handler unit is inherently used in order to determine that there is an error, or abnormality, so that the controller can display an error message). It would be obvious for Flores et al. to create attributes to handle the abnormal status detected by the status watcher using an exception handler unit as Flores et al. already disclose a status watcher. At the time of the invention it would have been obvious for Flores et al. to create attributes for an abnormal (or discontinuous) status change as Flores et al. already disclosed an observer that is informed of "the acts in the workflow. An abnormal status change occurs within the workflow process and attributes would be needed to create an abnormal status signal. A status device is used so that business processes in a workflow system may run smoothly and an observer and others concerned with the workflow process would want to use the status to stay informed of any abnormalities. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated create attributes to handle the abnormal status detected by the status watcher using an

exception handler unit as it allows the observer to more accurately know what is occurring in the workflow processes.

As per claim 12, Flores et al. disclose a workflow management system for controlling an order of execution of business procedures each including a plurality of business processes and at least one business procedure being allowed to execute some of the business processes simultaneously (see column 2, line 33-62, and figure 1, the parallel workflows allow the business procedures to be executed simultaneously), said workflow management system comprising:

a client application to be executed by one or more client computers (see column 3, lines 31-37, and column 7, lines 31-44, a client application is executed on one or more client computers);

a server application to be executed by a server computer for communicating with the client application (see column 3, lines 31-37, the server application is executed by a server computer and communicates with the client application);

an application database for storing data for the server application (see column 9, lines 31-33, the administrator database stores data for the server application);

a status watcher for detecting a status change in a business process being executed in the application database in a business process (see column 4, lines 30-34, and 54-63, and column 20, lines 42-47, the triggers change the status of the workflow and the transaction manager initiates new workflow processes, an observer is informed,

or notified, of all acts occurring in the business process, the observer therefore detects

the type of change to the status);

a workflow engine for controlling the execution of each of the business

procedures based on the status change detected by the status watcher and

predetermine business procedure definitions (see column 4, lines 30-34, the observer is

a status watcher, the observer is informed, or detects, the acts of the workflow, these

workflow acts include status changes and see column 4, lines 57-63, the status

changes are detected by the business processes using the triggered action).

a notifier for notifying the occurrence of a status change in the business process

to at least one of the client computers (see column 4, lines 30-34, an observer is

informed, or notified, of all acts occurring during the business process).

Flores et al. does not disclose an abnormal status change. However, Reid et al

(P.N. 5,892,449) disclose detecting an occurrence of an abnormal status change in one

of the plurality of related business processes (see column 6, lines 46-59, if the seven bit

code is abnormal then the status will result in an abnormal status change). It would be

obvious for Flores et al. to notify the client of an abnormal status change as Flores et al.

already disclose notifying the client of a status change. At the time of the invention it

would have been obvious for Flores et al. to notify the user of an abnormal (or

discontinuous) status change as the observer is informed of "the acts in the workflow"

and an abnormal status change occurs in the workflow processes. A status device is

used so that business processes in a workflow system may run smoothly and an

observer and others concerned with the workflow process would want to use the status

to stay informed of any abnormalities. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to include abnormal status changes as it allows the observer to more accurately know what is occurring in the workflow processes.

As per claim 13, Flores et al. disclose the workflow management system with all the limitations cited in claim 12, further comprising a resource selector for receiving an instruction and an identifier of the business process on which the discontinuance was detected from the workflow engine, and selecting the client computer to be notified of the discontinuance by referring predetermining rules previously defining the relation between predetermining business procedures and client computers (see in column 12, lines 26-34).

As per claim 14, Flores et al. disclose the workflow management system according to claim 12, wherein the status watcher, the workflow engine, the notifier and the resource selector are individual programs executed concurrently to control the execution of each of the business procedures (see column 2, lines 33-62, the workflow system is executed in parallel and therefore each of the business procedures can be executed concurrently).

As per claim 15, Flores et al. disclose the workflow system according to claim 12, further comprising a status watcher and for a user retrevial unit for displaying the status change by the status watcher (see column 4, lines 30-34, and 45-47, the observer is a

type of status watcher, the performer must inherently use a user retrieval unit to determine if a workflow is completed to satisfaction).

Flores et al. do not disclose handling abnormal status. Reid et al. teach creating attributes to handle the abnormal status detected by the status watcher using an exception handler unit (see column 6, lines 18-59, the bits are attributes describing the status of the workflow, an abnormal or discontinuous status can be detected, an exception handler unit is inherently used in order to determine that there is an error, or abnormality, so that the controller can display an error message). It would be obvious for Flores et al. to create attributes to handle the abnormal status detected by the status watcher using an exception handler unit as Flores et al. already disclose a status watcher. At the time of the invention it would have been obvious for Flores et al. to create attributes for an abnormal (or discontinuous) status change as Flores et al. already disclosed an observer that is informed of "the acts in the workflow" and abnormal status changes occur within the workflow process and attributes are needed to create an abnormal status signal. A status device is used so that business processes in a workflow system may run smoothly and an observer and others concerned with the workflow process =use the status to stay informed of any abnormalities. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated create attributes to handle the abnormal status detected by the status watcher using an exception handler unit as it allows the observer to more accurately know what is occurring in the workflow processes.

As per claim 16, Flores et al. discloses the workflow management system according to claim 15, wherein the user selection is made by referring to rules defining the relationship between predetermined business procedures and client computers (see column 2, lines 59-62, a workflow system uses a set of rules to define the relationship between performers and customers as shown in the phases of the workflow).

5.   Tamaki et al. (U.S. P.N. 6,275,809) discloses a notice board business system that stored the contents of the data and their status

Ohmura et al. (U.S. P.N. 6,151,583) discloses a workflow management method and apparatus that stores the information in a database.

Davis et al. (U.S. P.N. 5,870,545) discloses a system and method for performing workflow by determining activity failure or progress.

Randall (U.S. P.N. 5,745,687) discloses a workflow system that uses rules and

6.   Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to **Rebecca Bachner** whose telephone number is 703-305-1872. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday from 8:30am to 5:00pm. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, **Tariq Hafiz** can be reached on **(703) 305-9643**.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or

proceeding should be directed to the **Receptionist** whose telephone number is **(703)**

308-1113.

Any response to this action should be mailed to:

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Washington D.C. 20231

or faxed to:

(703) 305-7687   Official communications; including After Final

communications labeled "Box AF"

(703) 746-7306   Informal/Draft communications, labeled "PROPOSED" or "

DRAFT"

Hand delivered responses should be brought to Crystal Park 5, 2451 Crystal

Drive, Arlington, VA, 7th floor receptionist.

RMB
RMB
October 28, 2002

TARIQ R. HAFIZ
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600